National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Langley Research Center
Safety Alert

SA-06-01

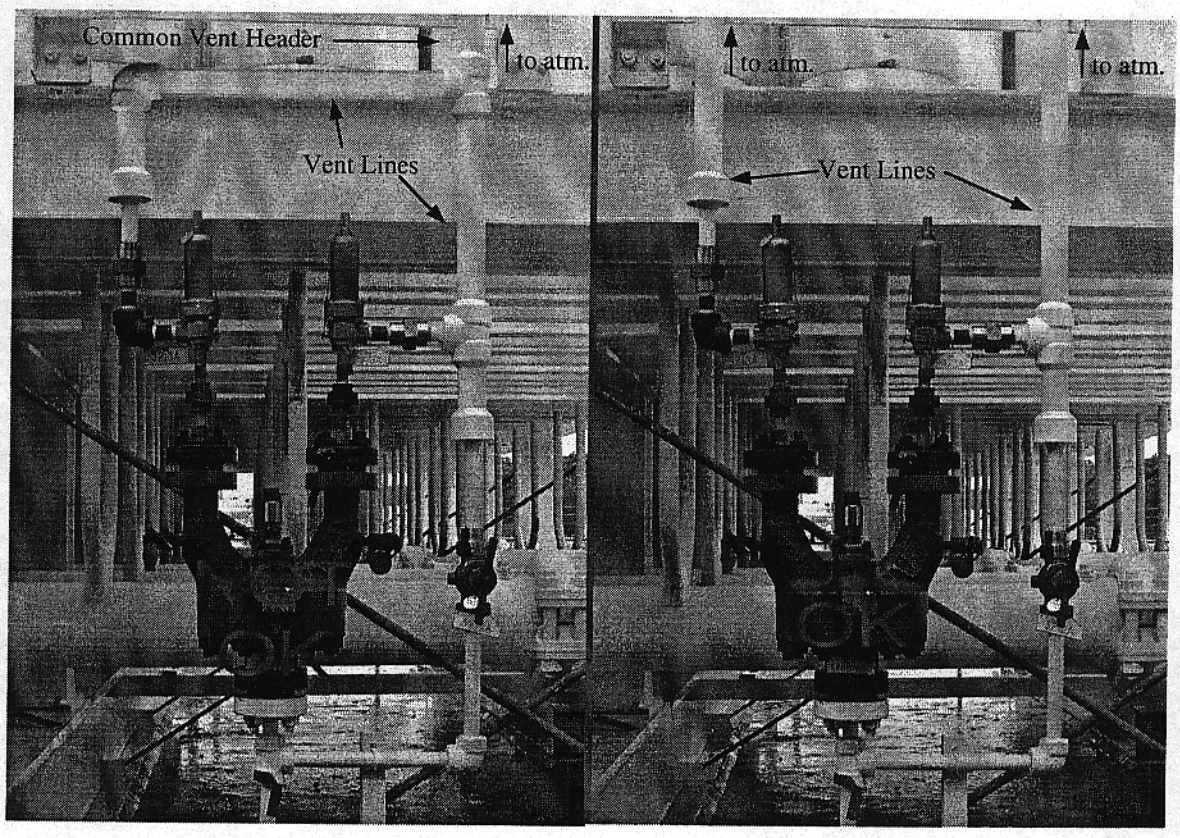
Date: June 4, 2001

TO: Facility Safety Heads
Facility Coordinators

FROM: 429/Head, Office of Safety and Facility Assurance, OSMA

SUBJECT: Process Vent Lines in Common Headers

Facility Safety Heads and Facility Coordinators and other facility personnel are encouraged to survey their facilities and identify all process system configurations where two or more vent lines are routed to a common vent header (see left side of the figure below for an example). These situations could be hazardous to personnel and equipment if one line becomes active (flowing) while the other line is disconnected from the system. Such a situation could expose personnel and equipment to high pressure and high noise situations. These configurations are typical in systems, which have redundant relief valves with an upstream selector valve to allow removal of one relief valve (for repair or calibration) without depressurizing the system. Other configurations could include cases where vent lines from different systems share a common header.



(This Safety Alert to be posted on Facility Bulletin Boards for a Minimum of 30 days.)

If you have a configuration as described above in your facility, action should be taken to ensure that a harmful condition does not exist. Typical actions could include separation of vent lines from common headers or conducting an analysis to determine that the worst-case pressure build-up in the common vent header is below 125 psig.

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact your Facility Safety Engineer or the Standard Practice Engineer for Pressure Systems at extension 46932.

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